

DAMAGE FEARED TO FRUIT CROPS

Dam Blasted to End Flood in Town

Damage to fruit crops by frost was feared in Salt Lake county and other sections of Utah Saturday, following wintry temperatures that developed on the heels of a near-week-long storm.

Temperatures dropped down into frost levels in wide areas.

At the Salt Lake City airport, the minimum recording early Saturday was 29 degrees, causing David F. Smith, state commissioner of agriculture, to surmise that fruit crops were damaged if a like temperature prevailed in other parts of the county.

In the city, the minimum temperature was 33 degrees.

The effects of continued precipitation were felt in the vicinity of Redmond, in northern Sevier county.

Basements in the town were flooded and a \$100,000 drainage system was rendered useless because outlets were below water level.

No property damage was reported, but in order to relieve the flood situation, the Westview dam on the Sevier river was dynamited. Three "shots" were fired and the entire dam was demolished so waters that had backed up into the town could be released into the channel.

Efforts were being made to obtain consent of owners to blast three feet from the top of the Gunnison-Fayette dam on the same stream.

Subfreezing temperatures were reported in several parts of the state. Duchesne reported 26 degrees, Coalville 28 and Delta and Modena 24.

Friday's rain and snow storm left .05 inch precipitation in Salt Lake City. The mean temperature Friday was 42 degrees, 13 below normal.

The forecast is for fair weather Saturday night and Sunday, with warmer weather Saturday night.

Blasts Ease Danger in Sevier Flood

Dam Dynamited to Relieve Redmond; Plan Control Move

As three thundering dynamite charges brought residents of Redmond at least temporary relief from flood waters of the swollen Sevier river, Utah state officials Saturday scanned with interest a plan to eliminate such emergencies.

Advocated by State Engineer T. H. Humpherys and favored by many Utahns is legislative action providing for creation of special control districts in flood-ravaged sections of the state, with costs of necessary construction to be assessed to beneficiaries.

Redmond's population of 600 breathed more easily after the third successive blast shot the impounded waters 300 feet skyward and loosened cement and timbers of the Westview Irrigation company dam on the outskirts of the town.

Four feet of construction material was shaken from the top of the structure, allowing the river's waters to tumble over the man-made barrier.

New Worry

However, residents of the south-central Utah town had a new worry Saturday night after F. T. Nelson, chairman of the Redmond flood control committee, revealed that the Gunnison-Fayette Irrigation company dam had been strengthened to hold additional water.

Mr. Nelson said that A. M. Mellor, secretary of the company, previously had agreed to aid the flood-ravaged town by cutting three feet from the top of the dam, which spans the Sevier several miles below the Westview structure.

A study of the flood conditions, which already have wrought thousands of dollars in property damage and threaten further inundation of farms and dwellings, was promised in Redmond Saturday by E. C. Knowlton, chief engineer of the state road commission.

Finding it necessary to determine relative elevation of various points in the vicinity of Redmond, Mr. Knowlton ordered surveyors to start work Monday.

May Build Dike

Consideration is being given by the town's flood control board to possible construction of a dike south of the city. However, feasibility of this move as a permanent means of control has been questioned. It was indicated the road commission survey would include 12 miles of the

river region, but that other agencies would be asked to participate before its completion.

With even higher water scheduled to strike Redmond within the next few days, the road commission is primarily interested in protecting U. S. highway 89, which may be flooded. However, Mr. Knowlton refused to commit himself on definite plans until he confers Monday with members of the commission in Salt Lake City.

Mayor Peter Peterson of Redmond expressed belief that in another week the water level of the river will be much higher than it has been in the past, due to anticipated necessity of turning water out of the Piute reservoir above Redmond. If exceptionally warm weather should cause the spring runoff to come all at once, landowners from Redmond to Richfield expect flooding of thousands of acres of bottom land.

Dredging Heightens Problem

Only a few hundred acre feet of water is now being let out of the Piute reservoir for irrigation purposes.

Although for many years the Sevier river bed has been filling rapidly with silt, the condition has been worse at Redmond since 1934, when the channel was dredged from Salina to within a half mile of the flood-stricken town.

For several years the Redmond officials have petitioned the state and federal governments without success for flood control. Facing the present emergency, city officials and many residents now feel that the only permanent solution to the problem is to dredge the river for between 10 and 15 additional miles and install dams equipped with "undershots" to carry the silt further down the stream.

The plan for flood control districts to curtail such conditions was first advanced last March by Mr. Humpherys in a letter to the state road commission.

At that time he urged the necessity of a detailed topographic map of the Sevier river area.

Pointing out that the area between Salina and Redmond is "one of the most aggravated cases of fouled river channels in the state," Mr. Humpherys said the bed or natural channel of practically every stream in Utah "has become so fouled, or filled with sand, gravel and brush, that the water in the springtime overflows the banks, with resulting damage to marginal lands, crops, property and roads."

He also said reduced stream flow over a period of drouth years, and damming of the rivers, has slowed down velocities and greatly increased depositing of silt from charged waters.

Lack of maintenance was scored by the engineer as one of the principal causes of such emergencies. Under present state law no provision is made for such flood conditions, and the road commission is empowered to act only when state highways become endangered.

"Conditions on this stretch of the Sevier river are gradually growing worse," Mr. Humpherys said. "Unless a remedy is applied, a section of the state road, the town of Redmond and 4000 acres of tillable land will become a lake."

Mr. Nelson said no accurate estimate of benefit of the Westview dam blasting could be obtained before Sunday noon after a part of the water has drained from the flooded meadow land.

Although the dam backed the water up only two or three feet in depth above the natural river level, it was sufficient to cause several hundred acres of land to become flooded and force water into the basements of more than half the homes in Redmond. The water table had been raised previously to such an extent that the town's \$100,000 drainage system is virtually useless, as its outlets are below water.

State Weighs Move to Save Town

Road Unit May Build Dike to Check Flood at Redmond

Fate of the town of Redmond rests on a decision to be handed down Monday by the Utah state road commission.

As floodwaters of the swollen Sevier river continue to menace the south central Utah town and thousands of acres of adjoining farm lands, the commissioners will assemble at the state capitol either to okay or veto a proposal to construct a huge dike—a dike on which at least temporary safety of the town hinges.

The road commission, however, is not empowered by law to construct the dike unless it is determined that the near-by state highway U. S. 89, will be saved from the floodwaters by such a structure.

Would Save Both

E. C. Knowlton, road commission chief engineer, after an inspection tour of the stricken area, said Sunday night that he believed such a dike would temporarily save both the highway and the town from inundation.

Findings of surveys taken Sunday will be presented to the commission at the Monday meeting.

Meanwhile, in Redmond the townspeople argued against proposed reconstruction of the Westview Irrigation company dam. Three powder blasts Saturday ripped the top from the structure and let some

of the floodwaters continue down the Sevier river. The irrigation company officials, however, declare they must protect their water users and plan to rebuild the top of the structure, since the blast removed more timber and concrete than was anticipated.

William
Gave Little Relief
 The blasting of the Westview dam reportedly did little to relieve Redmond of the floodwaters, as the Gunnison-Rayette Irrigation company dam, below the city, was strengthened and backed the waters up more than ever. 5/14/38
 Townspeople Sunday continued to express fear that the silt-laden stream would reach its height within the next week and would inundate the highway and the town unless the dike is constructed from the highway bridge to Redmond lake prior to that time.

William Osborne of Richfield, road commission district engineer, said the road commission surveys showed the lake is 2.6 feet higher than the state highway bridge south of Redmond, and added that some persons believed the seepage water which now fills basements of more than half the town's homes comes from the lake rather than the river.

Edmond Flood Legislation
 EDMOND—F. T. Nelson, chairman of Redmond's emergency flood control committee, Wednesday led the Associated Civic Clubs of southern Utah to assist in sponsorship of a legislative program aimed at permanent solution to the problem. Meanwhile, the state road mission began construction of a 100-foot dike to give temporary

Where High Waters Threaten Redmond

GUNNISON-FAYETTE DAM - S. L. TRIB. 5/10/38

